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Marilyn Wener
Excellence Award



Your support helps our researchers collaborate across disciplines and create an impact.

Thank you

While this past year continued to see many changes, Canderel Management Inc.'s generosity allowed us to stay focused on ensuring that our students are equipped for their future careers. Thanks to you, and our global community of alumni and friends, we were able to continue to provide an exceptional teaching and research environment throughout this period of adaptation.

Your investment in higher education plays a vital role in our students' academic, professional, and personal development. We hope you enjoy reading this report, which illustrates the importance of your support at the Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Institute (GCI).

As we enter our third century, it is clear that McGill is more than just buildings or rankings. Our campuses continue to thrive because of donors like you, who contribute to our successes year after year.

Thank you for nurturing new perspectives that stimulate creativity in students and faculty alike.

Canderel Graduate Studentship Awards

Established in 1991, the *Canderel Graduate Studentship Awards* are designed to attract talented young people to cancer research at the Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Institute. The Studentships are awarded to outstanding graduate students undertaking studies at the GCI or in the Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology.

2021-22 recipients

Recipient	Degree	Laboratory	Year of study
Kassandra Blais-Vaillancourt	MSc, Experimental Medicine	Dr. Luke McCaffrey	2
Hailey Dall-Proud	PhD, Biochemistry	Dr. William Muller	1
Catherine Deng	MSc, Biochemistry	Dr. Nahum Sonenberg	2
Asmita Ghosh	MSc, Experimental Surgery	Dr. Alain Nepveu	1
Ana María Hincapie	PhD, Biochemistry	Dr. Michel Tremblay	1
Faiz Hussain	PhD, Biochemistry	Dr. Lawrence Kazak	3
Daniel Krauss	MSc, Biochemistry	Dr. Jose Teodoro	1
Armin Moalla	MSc, Biochemistry	Dr. Thomas Duchaine	2
Vera Ruíz Moleón	MSc, Biochemistry	Dr. Arnim Pause	1
Michael Schwartz	MSc, Anatomy and Cell Biology	Dr. Arnim Pause	1
Emilie Solymoss	PhD, Experimental Medicine	Dr. Peter Siegel	1

Words of thanks



Dear Mr. Jonathan Wener,

I would like to thank you for your help in funding my studies via the *Canderel Graduate Studentship Award*. I am both honoured and appreciative of your support.

With your generous contribution I can continue to investigate the effects of macrophages on breast cancer progression. Specifically, I have been using imaging techniques to characterize the different macrophage populations present in breast cancer, and to identify how these populations are changing during cancer progression. I am also exploring their potential in promoting tumour cell invasion into the surrounding

tissue. With a thorough understanding of the mechanisms that underlie breast cancer progression, risk factors can be identified, and personalized treatments can be further developed.

When I decided to pursue graduate school, I knew that I wanted my research to contribute to women's health. Because of your generosity and efforts with the Défi Canderel, I can now focus solely on providing relevant data to aid in the treatment of breast cancer.

Thank you,
Kassandra Blais-Vaillancourt



Dear Mr. Jonathan Wener,

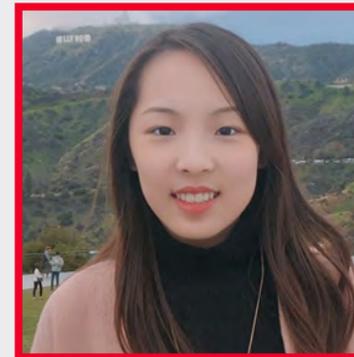
I'd like to formally thank you for your generosity in making the *Canderel Graduate Studentship Award* possible. I am honoured to be one of this year's recipients. Research efforts would not be possible if it were not for individuals like you.

This award will directly support my current research, which centres around HER2+ breast cancer. Breast cancer is the second most common cancer in Canadian women, and the HER2+ subtype of breast cancer makes up approximately 10-15% of cases. Although the standard treatment for this cancer is targeted therapy with the antibody trastuzumab, resistance remains a key issue in treatment. Under 35% of patients respond to therapy and of those that do, 70% progress to metastatic disease within a year. My project focuses on understanding the molecular mechanisms of trastuzumab resistance using transgenic mouse models, and how we can use this knowledge to better treat patients with the disease.

Your funding provides me with the tools to better understand this important issue and facilitates the use of advanced techniques and collaboration with other researchers. Furthermore, as a first-year master's student at McGill, this award will be indispensable towards future grant applications, and in the advancement of my career in science. I hope to use this award as a stepping stone for future achievements and to continue to strive for excellence in research and as a future leader.

I'd like to thank you again for your ongoing efforts, which contribute to this award. It is incredibly encouraging and motivating to be recognized for my work, and I am sure that countless other students have been touched by your generosity. I wish you all the best in the future and extend thanks on behalf of myself and the Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Institute.

Sincerely,
Hailey Proud



Dear Mr. Jonathan Wener,

It is an honour to be a recipient of the *Canderel Graduate Studentship Award* for the 2021-22 academic year. Thank you so much for your generosity.

I am a first-year master's student working in Dr. Nahum Sonenberg's lab. My research focuses on triple-negative breast cancer, which is one of the most aggressive forms of breast cancer that is usually metastasized and has very limited treatment options. With the support of this studentship, I hope my research can lead to the development of targeted and personalized therapies for treating triple-negative breast cancer.

As an international student at McGill, tuition has always been a burden to carry without any support from my family. Without the help of awards like this, many international students such as myself would struggle to pursue an advanced health science degree in Canada. Thanks to your generosity, I can spend more time on my research instead of working as a teaching assistant or finding a part-time job.

I am truly grateful for the support and I am passionate and devoted to my research in the cancer field. Once again, I sincerely thank you for giving me this opportunity.

Sincerely,
Catherine Deng



Mr. Jonathan Wener,

I would like to express my gratitude for the *Candere! Graduate Studentship Award*, which will go towards supporting my salary while I pursue my research project in the laboratory of Dr. Alain Nepveu. My project, entitled "DNA Repair Functions of MYCL and MYCN," will verify whether MYCL and MYCN are involved in DNA repair and establish how the inhibition of MYCL and/or MYCN DNA repair activities could cause the death or senescence of lung and neuroblastoma cancer cells in which they are overexpressed.

Receiving this award will help push my research career forward from both a credentials and resource standpoint. It has not only added value to my CV but also contributed towards my yearly stipend. Therefore, I would like to thank you on behalf of the Nepveu Lab once again for this award.

Yours sincerely,
Asmita Ghosh



Dear Mr. Wener,

I am writing this letter to express how grateful I am for the *Candere! Graduate Studentship Award* for the 2021-22 academic year. I am truly thankful for the financial support, as it will allow me to focus on my research on a full-time basis.

This award will support my research in the coming year, which focuses on B cells, a type of immune cell that is in charge of antibody production. I aim to understand the factors that regulate normal B cell development and the factors that can cause these cells to become cancerous. This way, I aim to develop novel treatments for certain types of autoimmune diseases and aggressive blood cancers that are derived from B cells. Ultimately, I aim to improve the quality of life of thousands of patients through my work, and this award will allow me to do just that.

Besides supporting my research, this award will open the door to new funding opportunities in the future.

Once again, I would like to thank you for making this award possible, which has a great impact on the life of young scientists like me.

Kind regards,
Ana María Hincapie



Dear Mr. Wener,

I am truly honoured to be a recipient of the *Candere! Graduate Studentship Award* for the 2021-22 academic year. This award has permitted me to pursue my PhD at McGill University.

I am currently enrolled in the Biochemistry PhD program, within Dr. Lawrence Kazak's laboratory at the Goodman Cancer Institute. Our lab's research focus is on obesity (the second-leading cause of cancer), and our work will help find new therapies, which can prevent obesity-driven cancer progression.

This award will support my salary, allowing me to focus on my studies and research at the GCI. Thank you for your support and for permitting me to achieve my academic goals.

Sincerely,
Faiz Hussain



Dear Mr. Jonathan Wener,

I sincerely thank you for donating to the Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Institute. My name is Daniel Krauss and I began my master's degree in Biochemistry with Dr. Jose Teodoro in January 2021. My lab recently performed an unbiased screen to search for protein in the blood of cancer patients and found the soluble Prorenin Receptor (sPRR). This protein is well known for its function in blood pressure regulation; however, it now seems to be important in the progression of certain cancers. The hypothesis to be studied in my project is that cancer cells secrete large amounts of sPRR to shift their metabolism to promote their growth.

My role is to use recombinant protein technology to produce and study the function of sPRR in this context. I have always been interested in the applications of technology, so I find this project fascinating because I will be using powerful technologies to study cancer. I hope to be able to produce large amounts of sPRR and study it. Antibody therapies have become more and more popular due to their recent successes in the treatment of cancer and other diseases. If we do find that sPRR promotes cancer growth, then this could lead to potential therapeutics to help cancer patients with a bad prognosis, such as antibodies targeting sPRR.

Again, I must thank you for your generous donations. This award comes at a perfect time for me, as we were in the process of ordering tools that I need to produce my recombinant protein. With your help, my lab can purchase high quality reagents for my experiments. These reagents are more reliable and designed directly for my application, so they will surely allow my research to progress as smoothly as possible. After I complete my MSc, I intend to continue on to a PhD, so your support truly marks a major milestone in my research career.

All the best,
Daniel Krauss



Dear Mr. Jonathan Wener

My name is Armin and I am a graduate student at the Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Institute. I am a 2021-22 recipient of the *Candere! Graduate Studentship Award*, which will help cover a portion of my annual salary. This award provides me with some degree of freedom, as I can better focus on my research instead of constantly worrying about finances.

There are a couple of things I would like to address in this letter. First and foremost, thank you. Not only because of your investment in cancer research; but for making it accessible to all groups. As an international student, it is often disheartening

to see that most awards are not available to someone like me. As if citizenship can be a basis of recognizing scientific potential. In either case, thank you again.

This award will help support my research in the Epstein-Barr virus (EBV). EBV is usually associated with the disease infectious mononucleosis (or more commonly known as mono). Although mono clears on its own, the virus almost always permanently hides and remains in the host without any more symptoms (usually for the lifetime of the individual). This hiding effect (which is known as latency) is associated with developments of multiple cancers including (but not limited to) lymphomas. My research focuses on how certain aspects of EBV latency are related to the mechanisms of cancer development. If successful, its results may (and hopefully will) be used to prevent future cancers caused by EBV.

Best wishes,
Armin Moalla



Dear Mr. Jonathan Wener,

Thank you for your generosity. In addition to helping me financially, this award will foster my scientific development, as I work towards becoming a Principal Investigator in lung and kidney cancer research.

This award will help support my research on the tumour suppressor activity of Ubiquitin-Associated Protein 1 (UBAP1) through its role in regulating the cell surface receptor proteome and its implications in cancer progression. The knowledge gained through my research should help develop therapies against cancer. Our lab has previously shown that UBAP1 is required

for the lysosomal degradation of integrin $\alpha 5\beta 1$ receptor, which in turn suppresses cell migration and invasion by preventing Src and focal adhesion kinase activation. Additionally, UBAP1 regulates the lysosomal degradation and the downstream signal potentiation of other cell surface receptors such as: EGFR, Toll-like receptors, integrins and TNFR1. It has also been reported that the downregulation of UBAP1 is linked to nasopharyngeal carcinoma.

Sincerely,
Vera Ruíz Moleón



Dear Mr. Jonathan Wener,

My name is Michael Schwartz and I am a first-year MSc student studying at the Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Institute at McGill. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Morag Park.

At the Park lab, as well as the rest of the GCI, we are intensely devoted to our research into cancer. We pride ourselves on our partnership with cancer researchers all over the world, working together to ameliorate the survival and treatment of cancer patients. This past month, I was made a recipient of the *Canderel Graduate Studentship Award*. I would like to personally thank

you for making this award possible. Funding opportunities like this one are a tremendous support to students like me who are launching our research careers. Your contributions to our research efforts are very much appreciated.

Sincerely,
Michael Schwartz



Dear Mr. Jonathan Wener,

I am writing to thank you and your efforts in making the *Canderel Graduate Studentship Awards* possible. I am very grateful to have been granted a Canderel Graduate Studentship for my upcoming research project in the laboratory of Dr. Peter Siegel.

The funding from this award will help support our laboratory's research in identifying and characterizing specific immune cells and cell interactions, which may promote breast cancer metastasis. Our main focus will be on neutrophils, the most numerous of white blood cells, which through interactions with cancer cells or cancer cell fragments may be reprogrammed

to facilitate cancer spreading. With the support of this award, our lab will contribute to the characterization and understanding of events leading to neutrophils becoming pro-metastatic. In the long run, such contributions aid in the identification of targetable pathways to counter cancer metastasis and progression.

Thank you again, for your support through the *Canderel Graduate Studentship Award*. Receiving this award allows me to continue in the field of cancer research for the rest of my graduate studies.

Sincerely,
Emilie Solymoss

Canderel Conference Travel Awards

The *Canderel Conference Travel Awards* were created in 1995 as an acknowledgement that the most meaningful learning experiences often take place outside the traditional classroom, and that cancer research is a fundamentally collaborative effort. Attending these conferences gives students the opportunity to improve their presentation skills, broaden their scientific knowledge, and establish new research partnerships with leading professionals in their fields.

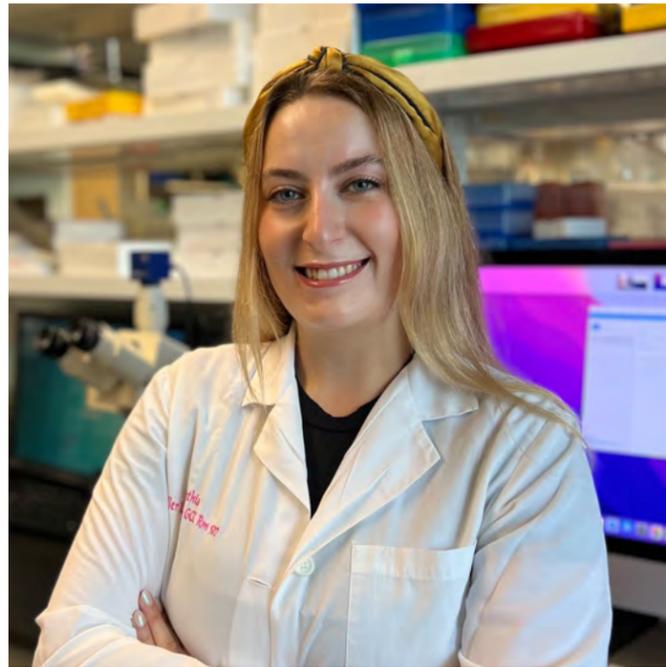
2021-22 recipients (in-person conference)

Recipient	Degree	Laboratory	Year of study
Abdulhameed Al-Ghabkari	PDF, General Medicine	Dr. Morag Park	1
Hailey Dall-Proud	PhD, Biochemistry	Dr. William Muller	1
Tianxu Fang	PhD, Biological and Biomedical Engineering	Dr. Guojun Chen	2
Yu Gu	PhD, Biochemistry	Dr. William Muller	2
Hira Khursheed	PhD, Biochemistry	Dr. Michel Tremblay	3
Alexander Nowakowski	MDCM, General Medicine	Dr. Peter Siegel	1
Janane Rahbani	PDF, General Medicine	Dr. Lawrence Kazak	1
Emilie Solymoss	PhD, Experimental Medicine	Dr. Peter Siegel	1
Hui Xia	PhD, Biochemistry	Dr. Vincent Giguère	5

2021-22 recipients (virtual conference)

Recipient	Degree	Laboratory	Year of study
Hailey Dall-Proud	PhD, Biochemistry	Dr. William Muller	1
Rima Ezzeddine	PhD, Biochemistry	Dr. Peter Siegel	4
Marina Fukano	PhD, Biochemistry	Dr. Morag Park	3
Yu Gu	PhD, Biochemistry	Dr. William Muller	2
Kayla Heney	PhD, Biochemistry	Dr. Ian Watson	2
Jennifer Huxham	MSc, Experiential Medicine	Dr. Peter Siegel	2
Chloe Liu	PhD, Biochemistry	Dr. Maxime Bouchard	2
Sarah Maritan	MD-PhD, Experiential Medicine	Dr. Peter Siegel	2
Simon Milette	PhD, Experiential Medicine	Dr. Daniela Quail	5
Alexander Nowakowski	MDCM, General Medicine	Dr. Peter Siegel	1
Shivshankari Rajkumar	PhD, Biochemistry	Dr. Ian Watson	6
Michael Schwartz	MSc, Biochemistry	Dr. Morag Park	2
Anna Shen	PhD, Biochemistry	Dr. Peter Siegel	2
Elise Vickridge	PDF, Oncology	Dr. Alain Nepveu	1

In-person conference learning experience



Hailey Dall-Proud

The Gordon Research Conference (GRC) and affiliated Gordon Research Seminar (GRS) brings together an international breast cancer research community for an agenda spanning the mammary gland research spectrum. This is an ideal opportunity for researchers, trainees, and clinicians to hear the latest developments in breast cancer research and network across disciplines. This year, as a participant in both the GRC as well as the student-led GRS I was fortunate to attend presentations spanning different facets of mammary gland biology (normal development as well as early and late-stage cancer progression) while attending over 50+ talks and spending another two days interacting with researchers during poster-presentation sessions. There were ample opportunities for networking, and I was able to speak to research groups from around the globe including research institutes in Spain, Italy, the US, and Canada.

As a poster presenter at the GRS, I was able to translate my current work to the research community, which is invaluable as I hone my presentation abilities and background knowledge. I was able to engage with other participants and learn interesting new techniques outside the scope of my research and expand my knowledge on not only breast cancer but mammary gland biology. This experience was incredibly useful as I transition into the PhD program and prepare to complete my General Advisory Committee meeting in the spring of 2023. Fielding questions confidently and calmly is an important skill to have while continuing to broaden my understanding in the field.

Participation in this conference allowed me to meet other researchers in the breast cancer field, exchange knowledge, and form connections with peers from other institutes. These professional relationships are important while I complete my research project, as they open the doors for future collaborations.

Participation in this conference was partly made possible through the travel grant funded by Canderel, which covered a portion of the registration fees for the event. I would like to sincerely thank all those involved in providing this funding, and for the impact they have made on my current research and presentation skills. This conference was a fantastic experience, which helped me feel confident when presenting my research to a highly-skilled audience. I hope to continue building these skills in the future and am hopeful to attend this conference again in the future.



Abdulhameed Al-Ghabkari

My name is Abdulhameed Al-Ghabkari and I am a postdoctoral fellow in Dr. Morag Park's lab at the Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Institute. I am a recipient of a Canderel Travel Award. This award helped cover my travel expenses to attend the 2022 Protein Kinases and Phosphorylation Conference: Mechanisms to Therapeutics in Nova Scotia, Canada. I was honoured to present my work entitled "Defining mechanisms of Action and Intervention of Met Oncogenic Variants in Human Cancers." I was selected out of more than 100 postdoctoral fellows to present our novel findings about the mechanism of action of exon 14 skipping mutation role(s) in oncogenesis and invasion/metastasis. Our findings revealed some key discoveries about the impact of this mutation on cell signaling networks and identified some potential therapeutic strategies that might be useful in targeting hard-to-treat cancers.

This opportunity helped me build solid collaborations and networking with peers from different institutes. I had an interesting discussion with experts in the field, which enabled me to plan a few directions toward completing this project and publishing this work in a prestigious journal. These activities are an essential part of building my career portfolio and will help me steer my career as an independent researcher and principal investigator in the future.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Jonathan Wener for his support through the *Canderel Conference Travel Award*. It has helped me to advance my research and academic activities by allowing me to meet, interact, and collaborate with leaders in cell signaling and cancer research.



cell culture media. I learned several new methods of single cell RNA sequencing analysis and data representation, including richness, abnormality, and individuality. This will allow me to approach my own sequencing from a different perspective and extrapolate novel data to complement my project. I also had the chance to participate in Power Hour, where I learned about remaining challenges ensure diversity and inclusion in academia. As current President of the Goodman Cancer Student Society and member of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee, I hope to share some of these implementations with the GCI administration to render it a more supportive learning environment.

Overall, by presenting at and attending the 2022 Gordon Research Conference, I practiced concise and efficient public speaking skills and established connections with other international cancer and mammary gland biology scientists. This experience helped me tailor my future doctoral research to be more comprehensive in breast cancer dormancy and recurrence.

I would like to once again thank you for supporting my research and studies through the *Canderel Conference Travel Award*.

Yu Gu

I am writing to express my sincerest thank you for supporting my attendance at the 2022 Gordon Research Seminar and Conference on Mammary Gland Biology. Attendance at this event allowed me to foster partnerships with international cancer researchers and share and receive insightful feedback on my ongoing graduate research project on breast cancer dormancy, recurrence, and estrogen receptor mutation.

I had the opportunity to present my work titled "Recurrence of $\beta 1$ Integrin-Deficient Mammary Tumours From Dormancy Involves Both Cancer Cell Intrinsic and Extrinsic Adaptations." Specifically, I benefitted greatly from poster session discussions with other graduate students and international professors in my field. I was also exposed to numerous novel techniques and models (in vitro and in vivo) that I hope to integrate in my own research, including tissue density analysis, 3D imaging, multichannel immunohistology staining, matrix extraction from



I attended all the four important plenaries presented by the following researchers:

- > Dr. Kinam Park – Biodegradable Polymers: From Drug Delivery to Everyday Plastics
- > Dr. Puja Sapara – Advances in Antibody-Based Therapies for Oncology Applications
- > Dr. Ijeoma Uchegbu – Controlling in Vivo Drug Transport with Pharmaceutical Nanotechnology
- > Dr. Y. James Kang – Target-Specific Controlled Release of Copper Promotes Myocardial Regeneration in Monkey Model of Ischemic Heart Disease

Moreover, I attended four tech sessions on the topics of bioinspired and biomimetic delivery, nanomedicine and nanoscale delivery, immuno delivery, and gene delivery.

This was my first conference in-person in Canada, and I felt really excited to have the chance to meet many young researchers from all over the world. I believe that this conference was a really valuable experience for me, and what I learned there will give me much inspiration for my future research work.

Tianxu Fang

My name is Tianxu Fang, a PhD student at the Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Institute. I'm very happy that I attended the Controlled Release Society 2022 Annual Meeting with the generous support of the *Canderel Conference Travel Award*.

I gave the following two poster presentations at the meeting:

1. Transdermal Cold Atmospheric Plasma-Mediated Immune Checkpoint Blockade Therapy
2. Portable Air-fed Cold Atmospheric Plasma Device for Postsurgical Cancer Treatment.

I introduced the rationales and results of these two projects to those who were interested in our work, answered their questions, and discussed some related topics with them. I also went to see many other posters and consulted the presenters to know more about their interesting work in the poster hub.



Hira Khursheed

I am a third-year PhD student in Dr. Michel L Tremblay's lab at McGill University. My PhD projects focus on the role of one of the most important phosphatases – protein tyrosine phosphatases of regenerating liver, in renal cell carcinoma, rare kidney diseases in children as well as different infectious diseases. This meeting proved very insightful through the knowledge exchange with world-renowned professors, peers and scientists working on phosphatases.

Listening to keynote speakers from world-famous institutes exposed me to so much knowledge on protein tyrosine phosphatases. The sessions that really helped me develop a deeper insight on the subject matter included:

- > Phosphatases in Cancer Biology by Dr. Rosalie Sears and Dr. Tony Tiganis
- > Targeting Tyrosine Phosphatases for Anti-cancer Therapy by Dr. Benjamin Neel
- > Phosphorylation Signaling by Phosphoprotein Phosphatases by Dr. Arminja Kettenbach
- > Structure/Function and Therapeutic Targeting of Protein Tyrosine Phosphatases by Dr. Zhong-Yin Zhang

The basic and applied knowledge that I gained, opened innovative avenues to understanding fundamental biology, and their associated genetic and putative directions for novel therapeutics.

My poster presentation was a success and resulted in an interesting discussion with the audience. I learned so much during these presentations. I met and spoke with researchers from all over the globe, and developed very helpful professional connections.

It was also my first time travelling since I started my journey as a PhD student. Visiting Greece and exploring the Acropolis of Athens and its monuments was an extremely memorable experience.

I am very thankful to Mr. Jonathan Wener for giving me this opportunity through the *Candere! Conference Travel Award*. I would not have been able to attend this important conference and managed the expenses without it.



Alexander Nowakowski

Attending the Light Sheet Fluorescence Microscopy (LSFM) Conference in Woods Hole was an invaluable experience as a student and researcher. I am very grateful for the *Candere! Conference Travel Award* for making it possible.

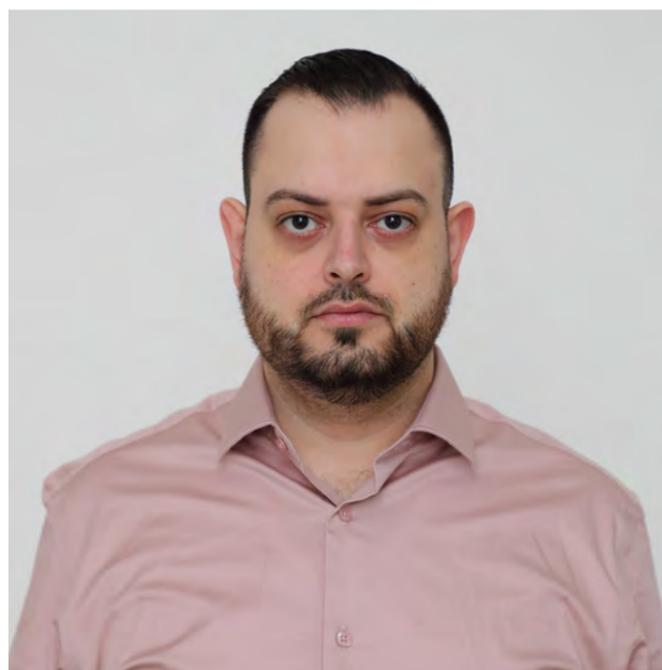
The conference took place over three days, where I attended many seminars presented by developmental biologists and neurophysiologists using light sheet microscopy in their own work. While these subjects differ from my own work in cancer cell biology, learning about their novel techniques and experiments had immense translation to my own work. I was able to make connections with those attending the conference and discuss my own project studying brain metastasis. Through these conversations, I developed many new ideas that I will apply to my own research.

The conference gave me insight to the potential of light sheet microscopy for studying brain tissue. Importantly, I gained knowledge of the pitfalls and troubleshooting others underwent working with samples very similar to my own. This was crucial, as I will be using a light sheet microscope for my own work in the coming months.

I was given the chance to present a poster, outlining the work I had done as an undergraduate in the labs of Dr. Siegel and Dr. Brown. Through this, I was able to develop my skills as a presenter and communicator. It was refreshing to present my work to researchers outside of cancer research because they all had engaging questions and feedback relating to my research.

After the conference, I attended a three-day workshop. A total of 12 light sheet microscopy systems were brought to campus, and we were given two-hour sessions to try them out. Through this, I was able to gain hands-on experience see the potential benefits and challenges first-hand.

I am very appreciative of the funding I received through the *Candere! Conference Travel Award*. This proved to be an incredible learning experience, and recordings of seminars mean that I can continuously appreciate this experience. I am very thankful and look forward to more opportunities to learn from other researcher and also present my own findings.



Janane Rahbani

I would like to summarize a few presentations I found very interesting. I attended the talks of Professors Robert Farese and Tobias Walther. Their presentations discussed the evolution of adipocytes biology. In particular, they discussed the role of several proteins targeted to the lipid surface and how triglycerides are packaged into droplets via Seipin, a protein present in the endoplasmic reticulum.

Next, Professor Camilla Scheele, one of the most renowned scientists in the field of human brown adipose tissue (BAT), described the role of follistatin-related protein 3 (FSTL3) in the differentiation of thermogenic cells. FSTL3 was secreted from BAT and was found to be colocalized with uncoupling protein 1 (UCP1), an important thermogenic protein. Moreover, Prof. Yu-Hua Tseng explained how oxylipins can act as signaling molecules and how maresin 2 (MaR2) modulates monocyte and macrophage population resulting in less inflammation in obese mice.

Other speakers such as Professors Gregory Steinberg and Andrew Lutkewitte discussed the relation between adipose tissue dysfunction and hepatic metabolism. Professor Daniel Druker gave an inspirational talk about few drugs developed in his laboratory, currently in clinical trials, that target obesity and type 2 diabetes. Professor Evanna Mills explained how obesity and inflammation impact cellular metabolism. Specifically, the role of succinate and its receptor were extensively discussed. Professor Claudio Villanueva talked about different adipocytes subtypes and their different roles in regulating energy balance. Finally, Professor Alexander Bartelt clarified the importance of nuclear factor erythroid 2-related factor 2 (NRF2) in regulating the antioxidative defense and the role of NRF1 in enhancing proteasomal activity.

Since my projects seek to identify the mechanisms involved in thermogenesis in BAT, this conference was very helpful in introducing me to new areas in the field I did not focus on in the past. In addition, the symposium strengthened my beliefs that the activation of thermogenesis in BAT is physiologically relevant in humans. These new discoveries will undoubtedly lead to the discovery of novel therapies that combat obesity and its related diseases such as type 2 diabetes and many cancers. Furthermore, presenting my original research conducted at McGill during this conference brought exposure to my findings on an international stage. It allowed me to network with scientists in my fields and establish new international collaborations. I believe that these connections will help me at the next stage of my scientific career, and eventually my goal in joining them as a leader in this field.

With that, I would like to thank Mr. Werner for supporting me in attending this conference. I would like to convey my sincere appreciation toward his generosity. Thanks to his support, I was able to meet brilliant scientists from all around the world. Moreover, the financial assistance brought me one step closer to my goal in becoming a principal investigator.

Thank you again for honouring me with this award.



Emilie Solymoss

With the support from the *Canderel Conference Travel Award*, I attended and presented a poster in-person at the International Society for Extracellular Vesicles (ISEV) 2022 annual conference held in Lyon, France from May 25-29, 2022. The ISEV annual meeting hosts talks on many extracellular vesicle (EV) topics such as cancer metastasis and tumour angiogenesis as well as cell-EV interaction, uptake, fusion, and cargo delivery and is attended by expert scientists from around the world.

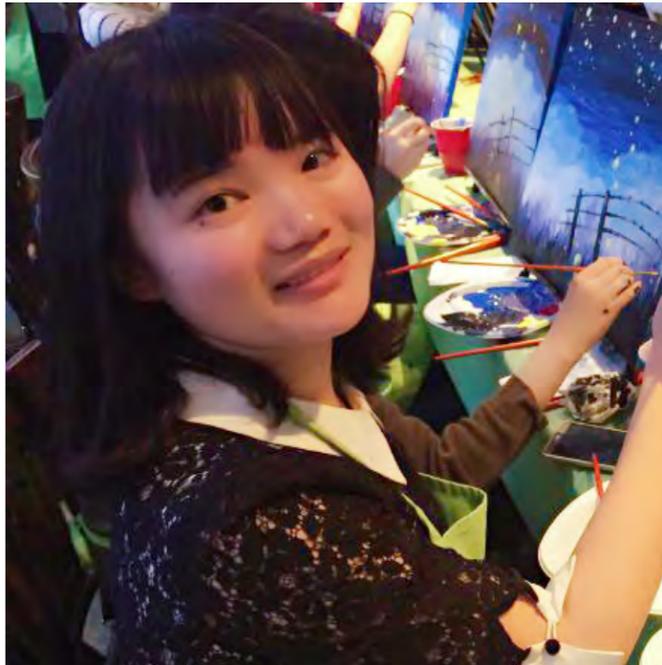
As such, I had the opportunity to attend and learn from many sessions and talks closely related to my interests and my research project. On May 27, I presented a poster with my work on characterizing the interactions between EVs and neutrophil subsets and the subsequent impact on NETosis in the context of breast cancer. I was placed in a one-hour session with other posters on similar and related topics on cell-EV interaction, uptake, fusion, and cargo delivery. This poster session gave me

the opportunity to share and discuss my work with people who shared my research interests and who shared their insight and advice with me. For instance, I was able to meet with Brian S. Dobosh from Emory University whose group has an interest in airway neutrophils and neutrophil-derived EVs in the context of airway inflammation. Furthermore, I attended multiple sessions over the four days and learned a great deal from them. For instance, the sessions focused on basic EV topics such as their biogenesis, uptake, characterization, and isolation and analysis methods, and provided interesting new perspectives and alternatives to my current purification methods and EV labeling strategies.

Additionally, there were many talks describing the roles of EVs in inflammation and cancer progression that were highly relevant to my project and research interests. Some highlights focused on the interaction of EVs with adhesion molecules of the blood brain barrier or the tumour or stroma extracellular matrix and how they contribute to inflammation, immunomodulation, and preparation of the pre-metastatic niche.

I would like to acknowledge the support from the *Canderel Conference Travel Award* in providing me with this valuable academic and networking experience. The connections and knowledge I have gained will be beneficial in my upcoming research endeavours.

Virtual conference learning experience



This conference greatly enriched my learning experience with valuable information, knowledge, novel experimental approaches, and hot topics in the field. I met a number of academics and professionals from different countries who have similar research backgrounds and they inspired me with future research interests.

In addition, the conference provided me with an excellent platform to establish myself and to gain confidence. I presented a short talk in the meeting entitled "Transcriptional Regulation of Insulin Action and Sensitivity via the GSK3 β -FBXW7-ERR α Axis." I was able to discuss my research and network with experts in the field.

Finally, I would like to thank Mr. Wener and the Canderel Conference Travel Awards Committee at the GCI for their generous and kind support.

Hui Xia

I attended the 3rd Fusion Nuclear Receptors Conference in Cancun, Mexico, from May 4-7, 2022. This conference was very interesting and relevant to my research on nuclear receptor (NR) signaling and metabolic diseases in Dr. Giguère's laboratory. Outstanding speakers and world-leading experts in the nuclear receptors field shared rapidly emerging advances in the research of diverse nuclear receptors in human health and disease.

The conference was divided into six sessions:

1. NRs in the Female Reproductive Tract,
2. New Insight into the Diversity of NR Functions,
3. Transcriptional Regulation & Function
4. NR-Cofactor Interactions and Implications,
5. New Approaches to ER Targeting
6. The Future of NRs: Biology to Therapeutic Target



was incredibly useful as I transition into the PhD program and complete my Junior Seminar. Confidently and calmly fielding questions is an important skill to have.

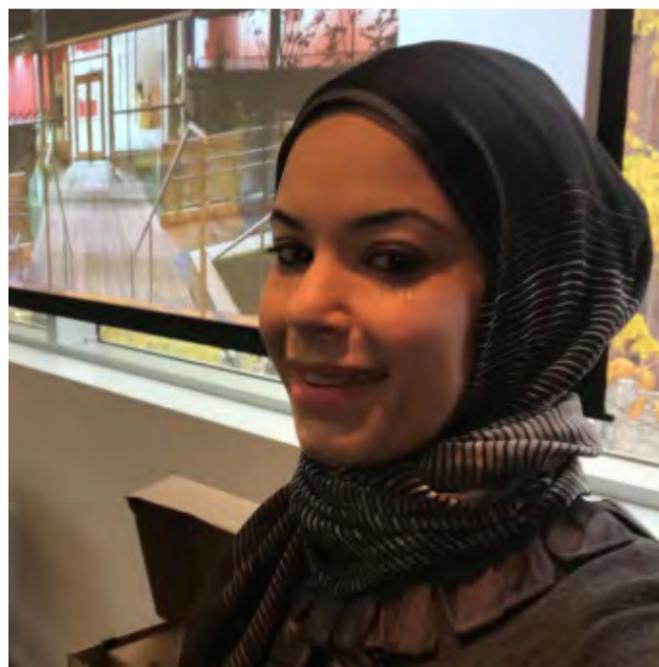
This event connected me with fellow researchers inside and outside of McGill. Participation on this panel allowed me to meet other researchers in the breast cancer field, exchange knowledge, and form connections with other institutes. These professional relationships are important as I complete my research project, and open the door to future collaborations.

Participation in this conference was partly made possible through the travel grant funded by Canderel, which covered the registration fees of this event. I would likely to sincerely thank all those involved in providing this funding, and for the impact they have made on my current research, and presentation skills. This conference was a fantastic experience, which helped me feel confident when presenting my research to a highly-skilled audience. I hope to continue building these skills in the future, and am hopeful that I will attend this conference again.

Hailey Dall-Proud

The Canadian Cancer Research Conference (CCRC) brings together the Canadian cancer research community for an agenda spanning the research spectrum. This is an ideal opportunity for researchers, trainees, clinicians, decision-makers, and patients to hear the latest developments in Canadian cancer research and network across research disciplines. This year, as a participant of the CCRC I was fortunate to attend presentations on different types of cancer (lung, breast, brain) as well as hear first-hand patient accounts of their perspective on cancer research and the impact research has on patient care. Despite the virtual format there were ample opportunities for networking, and I was able to speak to various Canadian research groups from other universities.

As a speaker at the CCRC, I was able to describe my current work to the research community, which is invaluable as I hone my presentation abilities and background knowledge of the field. I participated on a breast cancer panel and fielded questions from participants on my work. This resulted in many questions, which challenged my current understanding of my project, and the history of the research projects within my lab. This experience



As a McGill student, I was impressed by the number of speakers at the CCRC who are affiliated with McGill University; some of whom were graduate students while others were postdoctoral fellows or principal investigators. This reflects the high level of cutting-edge research pursued at McGill.

I participated with a poster at the CCRC and given how successful the event was, I am excited for its next session and aiming to have a bigger contribution as a speaker next time.

I am glad I had the chance to attend the CCRC and I thank you for your generosity for awarding me the *Canderel Conference Travel Award*. Your support gave me the opportunity to connect with fellow cancer researchers in Canada and to learn about their contributions in finding a cure for cancer.

Rima Ezzeddine

The 2021 Canadian Cancer Research Conference (CCRC), organized by the Canadian Cancer Research Alliance, was a great experience for me. The variety of topics covered was very impressive. The talks ranged from animal models to palliative care to Indigenous populations. I found the topic of aging with cancer pretty interesting as it shed light on a different perspective of life with cancer. In addition, I loved how patients were involved and given the chance to participate in the conference and to share their stories. Moreover, the lecture layout was convenient as it allowed attendees to join their presentation of interest and gave them the opportunity to watch the recordings at a later date. Furthermore, the conference portal was easy to access and navigate. Although this was the first virtual CCRC, the organizers managed to make it a very engaging event and a great success.



inhibitor and a p53 agonist. This knowledge will hugely contribute to my ongoing PhD project that focuses on targeting metabolic and epigenetic reprogramming to prevent the growth of triple-negative breast cancer.

Importantly, I also gave a short-talk presentation at this conference during the concurrent session on "Tumour Microenvironment and Immunology". I received great feedback and many questions after my talk. I also connected with patient advocates who were greatly interested in my research as well as researchers who work on similar topics.

Taken together, this conference provided me with new knowledge, perspectives, and connections with scientists and patient advocates, which will further improve my current work and help me pursue my career as a young scientist. Your support is profoundly contributing to my academic success and your generous donation allowed me to attend this conference, which was a wonderful learning experience.

I am delighted to have received this travel award. Thank you very much for your generosity.

Marina Fukano

I would like to thank Canderel for providing me with the opportunity to attend the Canadian Cancer Research Conference held on November 8- 11, virtually.

The conference was an international, translational meeting, which gave me a chance to network with many cancer researchers as well as patient advocates. Furthermore, there were talks on a wide range of research topics, starting from bioinformatics and tumour microenvironment to metastasis and precision medicine.

By attending this conference, I was able to learn about the latest ongoing research and significantly furthered my knowledge of cancer research. Particularly, I gained a greater understanding of mevalonate metabolism, metabolic regulation of MYC oncogene, and potential synergy between an epigenetic



Kayla Heney

Thank you very much for your kind donation to the *Candere! Conference Travel Award*. In November, I attended the Canadian Cancer Research Conference, an annual conference that highlights oncology research across Canada. This conference is attended by a diverse audience of graduate students, established researchers, medical clinicians, and patients.

The conference featured a variety of topics, including keynote sessions and short talks discussing targeted and combination therapies, tumour invasion and metastasis, the effect of the tumour microenvironment on tumour development and therapies, and the use of synthetic lethal strategies in oncology. I attended every talk within these topics, as they are highly relevant to my research project and graduate training. Additionally, these talks provided me with an overview of the latest techniques and novel therapies in the field of oncology, which will greatly improve the progression and future directions of my research.

Moreover, at this conference I was selected to present a poster titled “RAC1 P29S-Driven Migration is Regulated by IQGAP1 in Cutaneous Melanoma.” This provided me with the opportunity to present my ongoing research to a diverse audience of scientists and non-specialists, to answer questions regarding my methodologies and data, and to discuss other projects regarding cancer research with graduate students and postdoctoral trainees. I attended the virtual poster sessions and successfully connected with other students regarding their techniques and the interpretation of their results, which has furthered my understanding of a variety of cancers, including lung, breast, and prostate cancers. This conference has allowed me to network with peers and researchers across Canada, providing a framework to forge future collaborations.

Finally, I attended lightning talks, workshops, and panel discussions that specifically focused on cancer diagnosis and therapy for Indigenous communities and marginalized groups across Canada. These sessions were very impactful for me, since this is not a topic that is often discussed when performing research in the lab, but is an important aspect to consider when developing novel therapeutic strategies.

In short, I have gained invaluable experience from the Canadian Cancer Research Conference. This conference provided me with a wealth of knowledge on various types of cancers with a focus on novel techniques and therapeutic avenues. Moreover, it provided networking opportunities to forge new collaborations with researchers across Canada, as well as the chance to present my research to a wide audience. Thank you again for your generous donation.



Jennifer Huxham

The Canadian Cancer Research Conference (CCRC) was an excellent first experience at a national conference. Despite the fact that the conference was held virtually this year, I felt that the conference organizers did a great job in creating an engaging and interactive four-day conference. I enjoyed the overall layout of the conference. The daily keynote lectures were particularly interesting as they covered a wide range of topics, from aging and cancer to cancer therapies of the future, today. Indeed, I found that the aging in cancer and palliative care lectures were especially interesting as these talks were very patient focused. This exposed me to another angle of cancer research that I am not as familiar with.

I really liked how the sessions were hosted by a scientist and a patient. The cancer-patients were given the opportunity to share their cancer journeys. This helped ground the talks and remind everyone why we do cancer research – to help find a cure for cancer and save as many lives as possible.

The structure of the lightning sessions and talks was good as it allowed me to find the lectures that were most relevant for me to attend, allowing me to get the most out of the conference as possible. I was also very impressed with the number of McGill trainees that presented at the CCRA conference. It really highlighted the impressive research being conducted at McGill.

In conclusion, I really appreciate the funding I received to attend the CCRA by the *Candere! Conference Travel Award*. This support allowed me to engage with other scientists and learn about exciting cancer research being done across the country.



with meta-data analysis to generate potential markers as predictors of cancer recurrence. This can potentially help earlier recurrent cancer detections and decrease breast cancer morbidity due to relapses.

I gained much insight by attending the Keynote Session and Panel Discussion "Aging Well with Cancer". As breast cancer's biggest risk is age, is it important to not only learn the cellular mechanisms but also the socio-economic aspects of it. This is especially relevant to my project, which investigates recurrence in estrogen receptor (ER) positive cases. ER positivity accounts for more than 70% of all newly diagnosed breast cancer cases and, unlike other breast cancer subtypes, its rate of recurrence steadily increases with age and time post-initial diagnosis.

Overall, the 2021 Canadian Cancer Research Conference helped me practice concise and efficient public speaking skills, establish connections with other Canadian cancer scientists, and tailor my future doctoral research to be more comprehensive in breast cancer dormancy and recurrence.

I would like to thank Mr. Wener and the Canderel Travel Award Committee for supporting me in my academic and research career.

Yu Gu

I am writing to express my sincerest thanks for supporting my virtual attendance at the 2021 Canadian Cancer Research Conference hosted by the Canadian Cancer Research Alliance. Attendance at this event allowed me to foster partnerships with cancer researchers across Canada, and share and receive insightful feedback on my doctoral research project.

I had the opportunity to present my research, titled "Emergence of $\beta 1$ Integrin-Deficient Mammary Tumours from Dormancy Involves both Epithelial Cell Intrinsic and Extrinsic Mechanisms," during a panel tailored to breast cancer research. I had the opportunity to answer various questions during live discussion periods, especially on the cell genetic aberration aspect of tumour cell dormancy, which aligns with my current project on breast cancer dormancy and recurrence. Additionally, I had the chance to network with bioinformatic cancer researchers and discuss potential collaboration to combine cellular mechanisms



prostate cancer field and to present such in a cohesive manner. Participating in the panel discussion after my presentation, I answered a few questions that the audience had about my research. It was a nice experience to receive questions from the broader research community as it raised awareness of the research done in my lab and in GCI. It was a learning experience to answer interesting questions raised from other researchers in the prostate cancer field.

I also attended various sessions such as Personalizing Big Data, Immunotherapy, Aging Well with Cancer, Tomorrow's Cancer Therapies Today, and Understanding and Managing Risk - The Saga of Hereditary Cancer. The sessions brought attention to the incredible research taking place in Canada and its impact on Canadians.

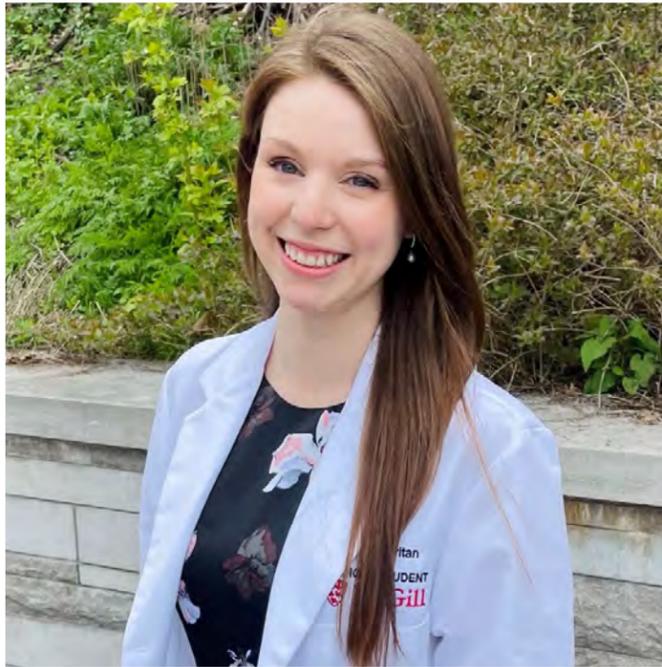
This learning experience also helped me to put my own research into perspective among all the cancer research fields, and at the same time, connect my own position with the broader cancer research community. I also had the chance to connect with a researcher from the Vancouver Prostate Centre after their interesting presentation on using bioinformatics to analyze gene expression and transcriptional factor activity in prostate cancer.

Attending and presenting at the 2021 CCRC was a significant learning experience for my research and career development. Thank you very much for your generous donation. Your support is invaluable to graduate students like me who are committed to cancer research.

Chloe Liu

I am very grateful for the *Canderel Conference Travel Award* that supported my participation at the 2021-22 Canadian Cancer Research Conference. This award allowed me to present my contribution to cancer research on the national stage. This experience also gave me the opportunity to learn more about cancer research within Canada, connect with other presenters, and became part of the cancer research community.

I delivered a lightning presentation and participated in the Prostate Cancer Panel session at the CCRC on November 9, 2021. I presented my research work, which focuses on the identification of predictors for prostate cancer progression. Having the opportunity to deliver a lightning presentation, I learned to condense my research to under three minutes by being concise and straight to the point with every statement that was spoken. It was also important to learn to identify which results would be considered important to the broader audience in the



Sarah Maritan

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude for the *Candere! Conference Travel Award*, which I received in November 2021 to attend the Canadian Cancer Research Conference. Through your generosity, I was given the opportunity to showcase my ongoing doctoral research at our country's largest cancer-related scientific conference.

I presented my project, entitled "Invasive Growth of Brain Metastases is Driven by Cancer Cell-pSTAT3+ Reactive Astrocyte Crosstalk," in an oral presentation during the Brain Cancer Lightning Session. This work is focused on the invasive processes of brain metastatic cancer cells, particularly on how a type of normal brain cells, known as astrocytes, contribute to cancer cell invasion. Presenting during this session was not only an opportunity to improve my oral presentation skills, but it also gave me the opportunity to answer live audience questions. Of note, my project was the only work on brain metastasis showcased

in this Lightning Session. All other projects were focused on primary brain tumours. This proved beneficial as it fostered an in-depth discussion comparing these two diseases. Moreover, we discussed how techniques and experimental models used in primary brain cancer research can be applied to brain metastasis work, and vice versa.

The exposure this conference provided my project has led to an exciting new inter-institutional collaboration with researchers from Queen's University. I have been in contact with Principal Investigators from the Queen's Cancer Research Institute who attended my talk, and we are currently discussing avenues to combine their expertise in specific molecular targets with our brain metastasis knowledge and resources. This collaboration was made possible thanks to the *Candere! Conference Travel Award* that enabled my attendance at this conference.

What I found most striking about the Canadian Cancer Research Conference was the number of cancer patients, survivors, and advocates that attended and actively participated in the sessions. In the session I presented, as well as throughout the many other sessions I attended, I appreciated how clinically relevant a lot of the questions and discussions were, largely thanks to the presence of this patient community. This focus on translational research and the thoughtful discussion of science at an accessible level with patients was particularly relevant to me as a clinician-scientist-in-training.

I am incredibly grateful for the experience at the Canadian Cancer Research Conference, made possible by Candere!. I graciously thank the donors for this opportunity to learn, present, and discuss cancer.



Alexander Nowakowski

The Canadian Cancer Research Conference was my first-ever conference experience as a graduate student, and I found it to be invaluable. This year's conference was held virtually, however I still felt as though I was able to maximize my experience during the four-day conference. The daily keynote lectures were particularly interesting as they covered a wide range of topics, from both research- and patient-oriented subjects. I found the keynote presentation regarding current imaging and radiotherapy to be very engaging, given my current work with MRI and radiomics. The rapid-fire lecture series on immunotherapy, cancer microenvironment, and brain cancers were all incredibly engaging and gave me the chance to learn about the current research that is going on in these fields by Canadian scientists.

The poster hall allowed me to easily search and find posters relevant to my own topic of research, while simultaneously giving me the opportunity to present my own findings.

Throughout presentations both academics and cancer-patients would host seminars. I really enjoyed hearing questions from cancer survivors who brought refreshing takes on relatively complex talks. Notably, these questions were often clinically based and challenged the presenters to think about their research in broader contexts. Listening to this dynamic was incredibly fascinating and made me challenge my own research, thinking of it in this light.

It was refreshing to see the depth of Canadian cancer research. More importantly, there was massive engagement by the McGill community, particularly from members of the GCI. I found that during lightning sessions, I was consistently listening to and learning about the work of colleagues from neighbouring labs. It was very encouraging to see the quantity and quality of research that goes on at the cancer centre where I work.

I am very appreciative of the funding I received through the *Candere! Conference Travel Award*. It provided me with my first conference experience in my career as a researcher. This proved to be an incredible learning experience, and recordings of seminars mean that I can continuously appreciate this experience. I am very thankful for this opportunity and look forward to more that allow me to learn of research within my field and present my own findings.



Shivshankari Rajkumar

The Canadian Cancer Research Conference hosts attendees from basic, translational, clinical, and health policy backgrounds, all united in the goal of improving cancer patient prognosis. The 2021 virtual conference held oral and poster sessions that discussed the genetic mechanisms underlying cancer progression and corresponding therapeutic interventions to exploit such vulnerabilities.

I had a very positive and enriching experience at this year's virtual conference. My major PhD project entitled, "From Cell Signaling to Drug Targeting in Melanoma" was presented by my principal investigator and I was able to participate in numerous virtual sessions. Our project has dissected the intricate biochemical signalling of melanomas with frequent genetic alterations within the Mitogen Activated Protein Kinase (MAPK) pathway, one of the most frequently dysregulated protein pathways in melanoma. In addition, we have identified FDA-approved

strategies that can effectively target these complex MAPK mutant melanomas. I found several talks particularly useful to me in further understanding how one can exploit aberrant signalling networks in cancer. I have highlighted one such talk below with corresponding key take-away points:

Mr. Emmanuel Asante, McGill University Genome-Wide CRISPR Cas9 Screen Reveals a Synthetic Lethal Interaction Between PARG and PTEN in Melanoma.

- > PARylation is the post-translational modification of proteins that require PARP1/2 and PARG proteins necessary for cell surveillance, transcriptional activation, and apoptosis.
- > PARG is overexpressed in numerous cancers, and in inhibitors developed against PARG display in anti-cancer activity in vitro yet no biomarkers exist that predict sensitivity to PARG inhibition.
- > CRISPR-CAS9 screen using PARG inhibitors to identify synthetic lethal interactions revealed loss of PTEN conferred sensitivity to PARG inhibition.
- > Melanoma lines with PTEN loss were in fact sensitive to PARG inhibition, demonstrating clinical relevance of this work.

Finally, I would like to thank Mr. Jonathan Wener for providing the *Canderel Conference Travel Awards*, which making attending these enriching events possible.



Michael Schwartz

The Canadian Cancer Research Conference is a research conference held every two years hosted by the Canadian Cancer Research Alliance. Generally, this event is held in person. Under the current circumstances, however, I was able to attend this year's CCRC virtually. Although it would have been nice to attend such an event in person, mainly for the experience but also for the enhanced networking opportunities, the online event had its benefits. The main benefit was to be able to access and listen to many more talks than would have been possible if the event were held in person.

One of the reasons I enjoyed participating in the CCRC specifically is that they host talks from Canadian researchers and institutes. It was interesting to see what kind of research was being conducted specifically in Canada. The event hosted talks from respected principal investigators from the GCI like Dr. Ian Watson, as well as peers from my own lab and others. It was a

pleasure to see involvement from so many GCI members and to hear their work be presented. I was personally able to participate in the event through a poster presentation. Hearing and learning about Canadian cancer research allowed me to envision possible collaborations as I learned about research being conducted that was in my field and similar to mine.

My favourite part of the conference was the importance the hosts placed on patient care. After each presentation, the host would ask the speaker to clearly explain how their research could be translated to clinical use and which patients could benefit from it. I believe that this is a regularly overlooked component of medical research as researchers can often lose sight of the fact that the overarching goal is to make discoveries that will help patients with cancer and other diseases.

I am very grateful to Mr. Wener and Canderel for funding my CCRC experience this year and I look forward to participating in more conferences in the future.



Anna Shen

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to attend the Canadian Cancer Research Conference. It was an excellent experience attending a national conference. Even though the conference was held virtually this year, the conference was still very engaging and interactive. In particular, I really enjoyed the keynote lectures, covering topics such as aging and cancer, future therapies for cancer, analyzing big data, etc. The topics were greatly diversified. I was exposed to cancer research and analysis tools that I am not as familiar with.

The overall layout of the conference was well planned. I found that the inclusion of a patient partner with a researcher very well done. The patient partners were given the opportunity to share their cancer journeys. This helped to ground the talks and help to remind everyone why we do cancer research. It connected the research in the laboratories to real life impacts on the patients themselves.

The conference had many concurrent sessions, which were recorded, for attendees to watch at a later date. There were always sessions that were relevant and interesting for me to attend. The talks were very well done. The engagement in the CCRC within the McGill research community was very impressive, as many of the talks were from McGill. I presented a poster, which was exhibited in the poster hall along with several hundred others. It was eye-opening to learn about all the research that is being conducted.

In conclusion, I really appreciate the funding I received through the *Candere! Conference Travel Award*, which allowed me to attend the CCRC. This support allowed me to engage with other scientists and learn about exciting cancer research being done across the country.



Simon Milette

Thanks to the 2021 *Candere! Conference Travel Award*, I was able to attend the sixth biennial Canadian Cancer Research Conference organized by the Canadian Cancer Research Alliance. The CCRC brought together the Canadian cancer research community for an agenda spanning basic biomedical sciences to clinical research.

While attending this conference, I had the opportunity to network with scientists, trainees, clinicians, decision-makers, and patients to share my latest academic findings and hear about the latest developments in Canadian cancer sciences. These discussions gave me a new perspective on my research thesis and gave me new ideas about future directions. Specifically, I learned about potential biochemical mechanisms involved in the disease I study, which allowed me to better plan the next set of experiments that are going to be critical to the completion of my thesis.

Once again, I would like to thank Candere! for this travel award.

Elise Vickridge

The Canadian Cancer Research Alliance held an online conference in November 2021. Thanks to Candere!, I was able to attend the CCRA and was selected to prepare a poster. This was one of the first conferences I could attend since the beginning of the pandemic and it was very exciting to discover some of the work done in the last year on cancer research.

Unlike other conferences we usually attend in our lab, the CCRC has a much broader scope and covers topics such as ethics, aging with cancer or Indigenous cancer research. These talks, although quite far from the fundamental work we conduct, are very interesting as they give us a broader view of cancer research and reminds us of what we are ultimately working towards. Also, having cancer patients co-chair the different sessions also brings a more personal and human aspect to our research.

Unfortunately, I was quite disappointed by the poster session. I did not get any feedback and no one reached out to me for questions. I was looking forward to discussing my project, especially since we are currently writing a manuscript and all critical observations are precious. I think that not dedicating a given time slot to poster sessions and keeping it remote (unlike having a hangout room where all poster presentations would be available) was a mistake.

However, I was particularly excited by a lightning session held by Dr. Alexandre Orthwein. Indeed, he describes that PogZ, a Zn finger protein promotes homology directed repair. The PogZ protein rang a bell and led me to some extra research. I found that PogZ is described to induce BCL11A, the protein I am working on and we found that BCL11A overexpression is also correlated with a higher mutation signature corresponding to increased homologous recombination. Together, these results strengthen the possible link between BCL11A, PogZ and homologous recombination. We are hoping to get in touch with Dr. Orthwein to further investigate this possible link.

Altogether, this conference not only allowed me to learn about new research conducted in the field but it also led to a possible correlation between BCL11A, my protein of interest, and PogZ, a protein involved in DNA homologous recombination.

Canderel Rising Star Summer Internship Awards

For many years, the CIHR/FRQS training program provided funding for undergraduate students to participate in summer internships at the Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Institute. When this funding ended in 2016, the GCI was able to continue offering this successful program thanks to the Défi Canderel. To recognize this change in funding, the program has been named the *Canderel Rising Star Summer Internship Awards*. The internship offers a partial stipend of \$2,000 to students joining a GCI researcher's laboratory for the summer.

2021-22 recipients

Recipient	Degree	Laboratory	Year of study
Mariam Ali	BSc, Immunology	Dr. Logan Walsh	3
Anne Blouin	BSc, Anatomy and Cell Biology	Dr. Luke McCaffrey	3
Tianhao Cheng	BSc, Biochemistry	Dr. Thomas Duchaine	3
Connie Guo	BSc, Anatomy and Cell Biology	Dr. Jose Teodoro	2
Mysha Ibnat	BSc, Microbiology and Immunology	Dr. Guojun Chen	3
Georgia Kruck	BSc, Psychology	Dr. Peter Siegel	2
Jenny Li	BSc, Biology	Dr. Yojiro Yamanaka	3
Elise Macdougall	BSc, Pharmacology	Dr. Morag Park	1



15 undergraduate students
benefitted from this award in the
2021-22 academic year

Recipient	Degree	Laboratory	Year of study
Sarah Menard	BSc, Cell Biology	Dr. Alain Nepveu	3
Madeline Perry	BSc, Anatomy and Cell Biology	Dr. William J. Muller	2
Racim Sansal	BSc, Biochemistry	Dr. Sidong Huang	2
Kaixiang Wang	BSc, Chemistry	Dr. Jerry Pelletier	2
Liam Wilson	BSc, Physiology	Dr. Daniela Quail	2
Chenyue Wu	BSc, Microbiology and Immunology	Dr. Michel Tremblay	2
Qiaoqiao Zhang	BSc, Biochemistry	Dr. Lawrence Kazak	2

Excerpts from the 2022 Rising Star Internship reports



Mariam Ali

The lab environment was immensely welcoming and encouraging throughout the whole learning process and development of the project. I felt comfortable asking questions about my project, shadowing other students, improving my technical lab skills, as well as exploring my curiosity for scientific investigation. Furthermore, I have learned skills applicable to my studies in class as well as my future in science and medicine. Finally, the lab would like to extend its warmest thanks to the donors who made this research experience possible. As an undergraduate student going into my final year, this award provided me with the opportunity to contribute to ongoing novel research and establish a project I can continue during my honours. The summer award allowed me to spend most of my time in the lab performing experiments, collecting data, and learning more about cancer research.



Anne Blouin

This summer internship allowed me to gain an important amount of knowledge on various laboratory techniques, including cloning, 3D cell culture, and microscopy. I also learned to work with others on joint laboratory projects and share ideas for future experiments. The application of such diverse methods allowed me to develop a critical mind on scientific experiments and broaden my field of competency.

I would like to thank the Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Institute for awarding me with a *Candere! Rising Star Summer Internship Award*. It has allowed me to join the stimulating scientific community of the GCI and given me the opportunity to confirm my wish to pursue a career in science.



Tianhao Cheng

It was a productive summer internship in Dr. Thomas Duchaine's lab. I enjoyed my working experience with my lab colleagues. I often came to the lab around 10:00 AM and worked until 5:00 or 6:00 PM (without a lunch break). If it was necessary, I would come to the lab on weekends. During this internship, I learned how to use the CRISPR-Cas9 genetic engineering toolkit and how to perform immunoprecipitation-western and mass spectrometry, etc. My supervisor, principal investigator, and other lab members provided me with all kinds of support. Dr. Thomas also held several interesting lab activities that brought relaxation to our work. It was indeed a great experience here, though it was a pity that the microinjector was no functioning. Since I could not finish all my experiments as planned, I decided to extend my stay in the lab to bring some of my projects to a better end state.



Connie Guo

It was my great honour to be awarded the 2022 *Candere! Rising Star Summer Internship Award*. It has been a summer very well spent. Thanks to this internship, I had the invaluable opportunity to turn my passion for research into practice and translate it into meaningful work in science. I learned and grew so much thanks to the tremendous help, guidance, and encouragement from all members of the lab. I would especially like to extend my gratitude to Professor Jose Teodoro for welcoming me into his lab and involving me in this PRR project; Ms. Isabelle Gamache for supervising and teaching me various research techniques that are the basis for performing experiments; and of course to Lili for being a caring mentor and teaching me even the little details.



Mysha Ibnat

I had a great time working with my fellow lab mates in the Guojun Chen Lab. I was not only able to gain experience and learn a lot of different techniques and assays, I was also able to learn about hydrogels and PLGA-PEG-PLGA polymers.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Mr. Jonathan Wener for his kind donation that allowed me to carry out this project. This award not only helped me gain research experience but it also gave me the opportunity to contribute to the field I am very passionate about, and I am extremely grateful for that.



Georgia Kruck

My experience in the lab was an unbelievably positive and transformative. This past summer, I experienced what life would be like as a graduate student and explore it as a possibility for my future all while being able to conduct real and significant research. I could not have wished for a more supportive environment. As someone who never runs out of questions, I am very grateful to the students for their insight and advice. I was given the opportunity to learn many new techniques and develop my expertise. As a result, I was able to return the favour and pass on my knowledge of certain procedures to other students who desired to conduct them.



Jenny Li

I would like to acknowledge and thank Canderel Management Inc., and their founder and CEO, Mr. Jonathan Wener for providing me the chance to delve into research via their *Canderel Rising Star Summer Internship Award*. The funding allowed me to stay in the Yamanaka lab this summer and develop fundamental skills in cell culturing, microscopy imaging, and software analysis, which will be pivotal for the completion of my master's project. The preliminary findings will also be useful to guide the direction of future studies in our lab. I had a great time learning new skills and I am grateful for this opportunity.



Elise Macdougall

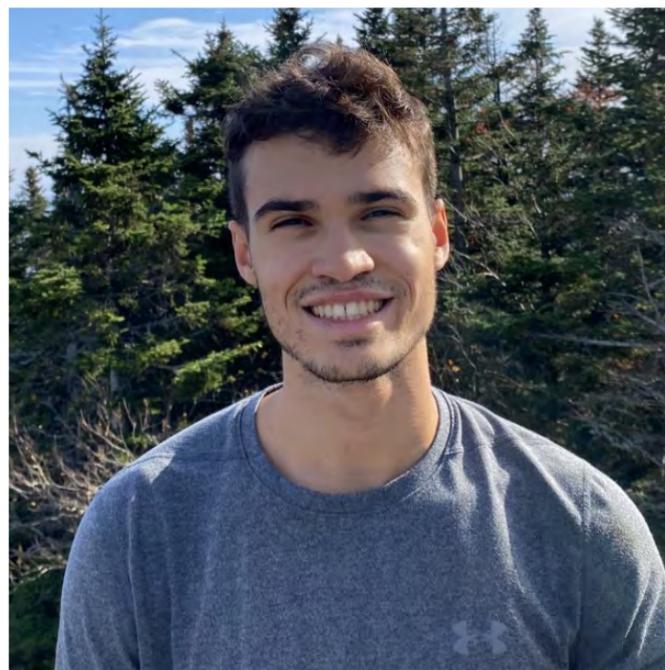
This past summer, I was fortunate to work under Marina Fukano's supervision in Dr. Morag Park's lab. This was my first time working in a research lab and I learned many valuable skills and gained knowledge that will certainly prove to be useful in future research endeavours. I am grateful to have been awarded the *Canderel Rising Star Summer Internship Award* and would like to thank all the donors for their support.



Madeline Perry

During the short period I spent in the Muller lab, we demonstrated that ENPP1 expression is correlated with stem markers. However, knockdown of ENPP1, as well as inhibiting ENPP1 using specific inhibitors, are required to understand whether ENPP1 expression is a bystander or a functional molecule in sustaining cancer stem cells.

I would like to acknowledge the Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Institute for their support this past summer and to the donor for the *Canderel Rising Star Summer Internship Award*. I would also like to thank Ipshita Nandi, Sherif Attalla, and Professor William Muller for their help and support in the lab.



Racim Sansal

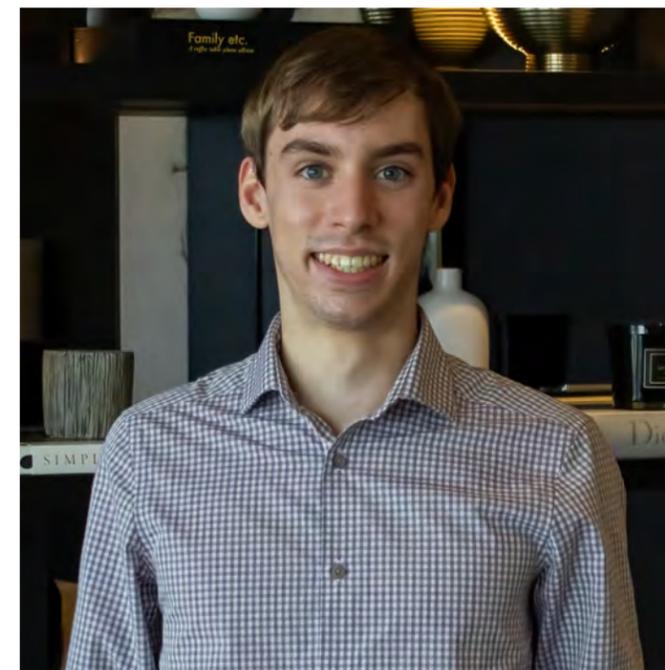
I am sincerely thankful to have had the opportunity to contribute to the research conducted in the Huang lab over the summer. This internship pushed me to develop my laboratory skills and understand various biochemistry techniques. It also led me to grow as a scientist, as I was able to develop my logical thinking, teamwork, and understanding of the literature. I am now more aware that there is still so much left for me to learn as a scientist. Thanks to this internship and Défi Canderel, who supported this project, I am determined to pursue a master's degree in biochemistry.



Kaixiang Wang

The experience in the lab was inspirational and educational and allowed me to learn extensive biochemistry knowledge and various biochemical techniques. Moreover, my incredible supervisor Prof. Pelletier showed me how to rigorously design complete experiments, thoroughly test hypotheses, and critically analyze the data. I sincerely appreciate this unforgettable lab experience during the summer.

I thank the *Canderel Rising Star Summer Internship Award* for their research support. I sincerely appreciate the generosity of the donor's incredible donation to support students like me. The valuable opportunity of being involved in full-time research made me determined to pursue a research career in the future.



Liam Wilson

The experience in my lab this summer has been very rewarding. I have learned a lot about the various laboratory techniques that I will need to pursue to further my studies in this field, as well as how to think critically about scientific data.

Thanks to this award, I have found my passion and a field of research, which I wish to pursue for my graduate studies and honours thesis work. For this, I would like to thank the generous donors for funding my summer internship.



Chenyue Wu

I want to thank all the lab members in Dr. Tremblay's lab and Mr. Jonathan Wener for his generosity through the *Canderel Rising Star Summer Internship Award*.

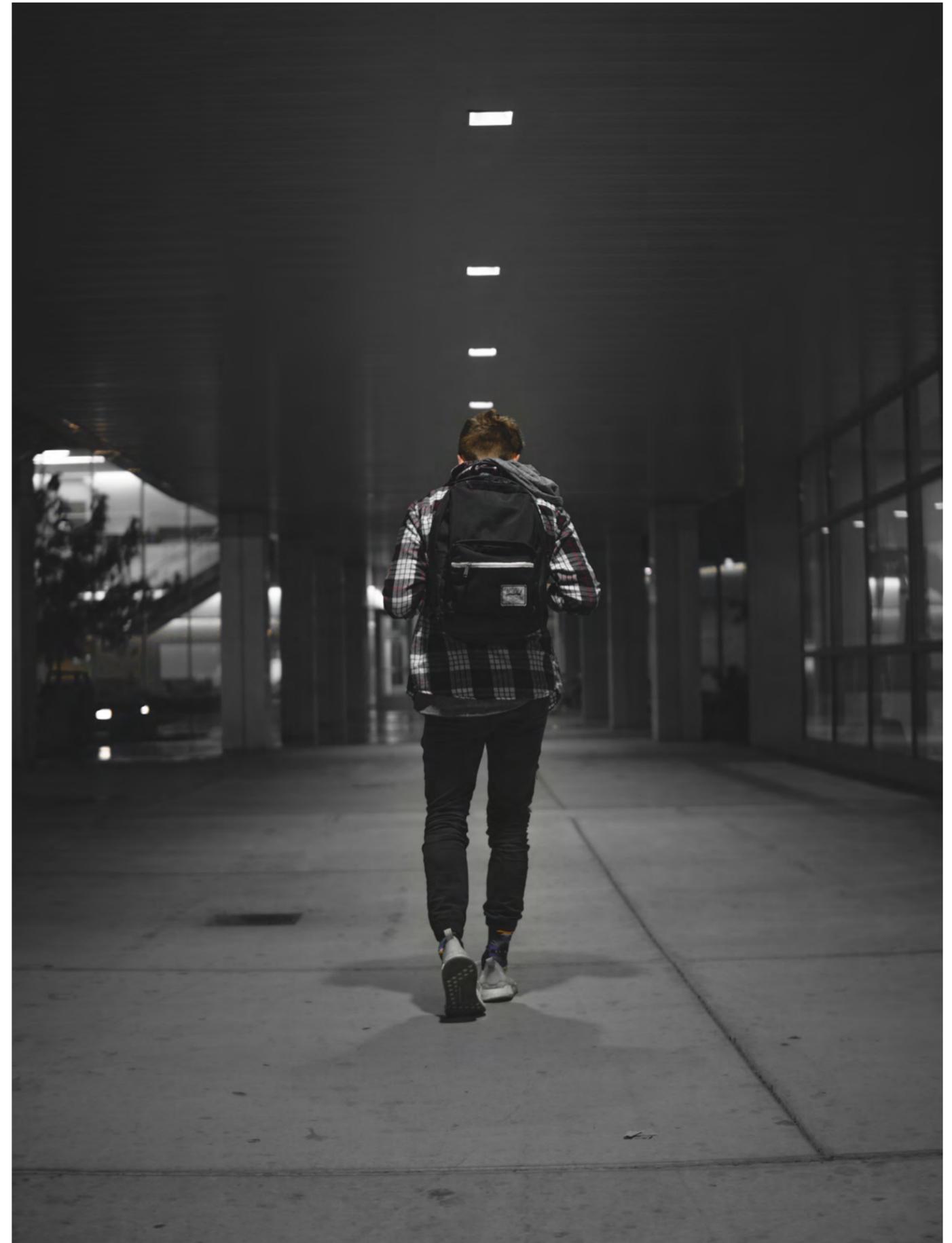
I had an awesome experience in scientific research this summer. I pushed myself to think more critically about each experiment performed. Thanks to my supervisors, my passion for research was boosted and my writing skills improved. I am also more confident about the research project that I'm going to conduct next semester.



Qiaoqiao Zhang

It was a wonderful time spent in Dr. Kazak's lab. In fact, I had been involved in this project since March 2022. At the beginning, we worked on lots of trial experiments and many of the results we were getting were based on failure. I learned that science does not always work, but the more important thing is to review, modify, and improve the experiments. As a trainee in Dr. Kazak's lab, I received a lot of help, and the lab was like a warm family. I am truly grateful for this experience.

I would like to thank the donor of the *Canderel Rising Star Summer Internship Award* for the opportunity to investigate the field of obesity. During the four-month internship, I established my own research interests and was fully immersed in the scientific world.



Canderel Fellowship Awards

The *Canderel Fellowship Awards* have been an essential component of the Défi's funding for Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Institute trainees since 1991. By offering a partial stipend of \$25,000 per year to incoming postdoctoral fellows, this Fellowship allows the GCI to attract outstanding young cancer researchers.



2021-22 recipient

Belma Melda Abidin, PhD,
Biochemistry (Laboratory of Dr.
Michel Tremblay)



Dear Mr. Jonathan Wener,

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you for the *Canderel Fellowship Award*. I was thrilled to learn of my selection for this honour and I am deeply appreciative of your support.

I am a postdoctoral fellow in the laboratory of Dr. Michel Tremblay at the Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Institute. My training expectancy as a postdoctoral fellow is to gain expertise in cellular signaling and metabolism in cancer. I would like to continue my independent faculty career with a mission to uncover novel mechanisms for the treatment of blood disorders and leukemia. This award will financially help me while pursuing

my research project on "The Regulation of Metabolic Reprogramming in Adult T-Cell Leukemia by PRL Phosphatases". The overall goal of my research is to identify therapies that may extend survival in patients with leukemia.

Thank you for providing me this award. It is an important step in reaching my academic goals. This award will allow me to gain the confidence for launching my independent research career in cancer immunology. Thanks to you and all the donors that made the *Canderel Fellowship Awards* possible.

Sincerely,
Belma Melda Abidin

Canderel Entry Studentship Awards

The *Canderel Entry Studentship Awards* are given to first-year graduate students who have been recruited through the Student Recruitment Days process. Recipients are selected based on academic excellence, leadership capacity, and interest in research.



2021-22 recipients

Promita Ghosh, PhD,
Biochemistry, Year 1 (Laboratory of Dr. Morag Park)

Reese Ladak, MSc, Biochemistry,
Year 1 (Laboratory of Dr. Nahum Sonenberg)

Caitlyn Mourcos, MSc,
Biochemistry, Year 1 (Laboratory of Dr. Peter Siegel)

Annika Pedersen, MSc,
Biochemistry, Year 1 (Laboratory of Dr. Morag Park)

Sarah Petrecca, MSc,
Biochemistry, Year 1 (Laboratory of Dr. Daniela Quail)

Words of thanks



Dear Mr. Wener,

I would like to begin this letter by thanking you for the generous 2021-22 *Canderel Entry Studentship Award*. I was very happy and appreciative to learn that I was selected as the recipient of this prestigious award.

I am a Biochemistry PhD student and I plan to pursue a career in academia primarily as a principal investigator at a university or as a research scientist in an academia-industry hybrid setting. I am excited to go into my second year of my PhD at the GCI studying lung cancers and building therapeutic strategies to combat it.

With this generous award, you have lightened my financial burden, which allows me to focus on my full-time research and studies. Your kindness has inspired me to give back to the community through my research. I hope to be able help other students financially in the future just like you you've helped me.

Thank you again for all the support.

With my sincere regards,
Promita Ghosh



Dear Mr. Jonathan Wener,

My name is Reese Ladak, and I am master's student in the Department of Biochemistry at McGill University. This letter is meant to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to you and the Défi Canderel group for supporting me financially through the *Canderel Entry Studentship Award*. Coming from a humble background, it meant everything to receive this award along with the support in the fight against cancer, one of society's most debilitating diseases.

During my undergraduate degree in Microbiology and Immunology at McGill, I developed a strong curiosity towards viruses and cancer. Thanks to you and the Canderel team, I was able to live comfortably, participate in extracurricular programs, such as Youreka Canada that promotes scientific engagement amongst the youth in Quebec and across Canada, and put forth my utmost efforts into my research of developing a cancer-fighting oncolytic virus.

Oncolytic viruses are genetically modified viruses that specifically target cancer cells. There are two main mechanisms by which oncolytic viruses exert their anti-cancer effects: 1) Upon completion of the life cycle, oncolytic viruses will exit cells and in doing so, kill them; 2) Due to their foreign nature, oncolytic viruses will stimulate an immune response that will target them and the surrounding tumour microenvironment. However, because their modifications tend to weaken them, often the stimulated immune response will hinder the virus before it can exert any robust anti-cancer effects. My research focuses on developing a novel oncolytic virus that is more resistant to the immune response, thereby allowing the virus to survive longer in the host and potentiate its anti-cancer activity.

Each meeting, encounter, seminar, chapter, journal article, and experiment – whether failed or successful – has taught me that there is much more yet to learn. Even the most established or novel therapies have limitations. I am inspired to contribute towards the development of treatment options with improved versatility, patient convenience, and efficacy. I feel that the best way to prepare myself for the ever-changing landscape of experimental science and clinical therapies is to learn how to keep learning. Thanks to you and the Canderel team's generosity, I have been given the opportunity to equip myself with the best possible tools, skills, and experiences to accomplish this.

With best regards,
Reese Ladak



Dear Mr. Jonathan Wener,

I am writing to thank you for your support through the *Canderel Entry Studentship Award*, which has greatly assisted my academic pursuits as a graduate student in Experimental Medicine in the 2021-22 academic year.

I completed my Bachelor of Science in Translational and Molecular Medicine at the University of Ottawa in 2021, where my honour's research project focused on cancer cell movement, which contributes to cancer spread, known as metastasis. This inspired me to continue in the field of cancer research and I jumped at the opportunity to participate in the groundbreaking metastasis research occurring at the Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Institute at McGill University.

This award will support me in my ongoing graduate studies in which I am investigating how metastasized cancer cells communicate with the brain to establish and maintain aggressive brain tumours. An estimated 20-40% of cancer patients develop brain metastases, and these patients currently face a bleak prognosis, with little hope from the current standards of treatment. Importantly, this project will help elucidate the cancer-brain crosstalk, which may be exploited therapeutically.

My personal encounters with heroes and families touched by cancer have motivated me to direct my passion for biomedical sciences toward understanding this fascinating and devastating disease. This award will allow me to continue on this path, where I hope my research will one day inspire the pursuit of innovative therapies and have a positive impact on cancer patients.

Thank you again for your generosity and for supporting the next generation of scientists.

Kindest regards,
Caitlyn Mourcos



Dear Mr. Jonathan Wener,

I would like to express my gratitude to you for providing students with the *Candere! Entry Studentship Award*. I am honoured to have been selected for the Award that supported me in the first year of my Master's in Experimental Medicine. It is because of your generosity that I was able to focus on my studies and gain valuable research experience over the past year.

I am now entering the second year of my master's where I am conducting a breast cancer and biochemistry research project. I have always had a passion for science and helping others and I believe that my research, supported by your award, will contribute valuable findings in the scientific and cancer communities. This award further motivated me to continue being a dedicated student throughout my master's and to contribute to discoveries in the cancer field.

Thank you again for your kindness and support.

Sincerely,
Annika Pedersen



Dear Mr. Jonathan Wener,

As a recipient of the 2021-22 *Candere! Entry Studentship Award*, I want to thank you for your generous donation that made this scholarship possible. I am honoured to have been selected as one of the few students to receive this highly competitive award. By financing my first year of graduate studies, this award allows me to focus on my research in the laboratory of Dr. Daniela Quail.

I would also like to thank the people behind the Défi Candere! team who work tirelessly to raise funds for cancer research.

Sincerely,
Sarah Petrecca

Marilyn Wener Excellence Award

In 2012, the *Marilyn Wener Excellence Award* was established by Jonathan Wener in honour of his mother, Mrs. Marilyn Wener, BA'48. This award is given annually to one Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Institute trainee in recognition of their dedication to cancer research and engagement in activities, which promote and strengthen the GCI's principles.



2021-22 recipient
Sheri McDowell, PhD'22
Physiology, (Laboratory of
Dr. Daniela Quail)

Words of thanks



Dear Mr. Wener,

My name is Sher and I completed my PhD in Physiology, specifically in the field of cancer research at the Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Institute. I would like to thank you for the 2022 *Marilyn Wener Excellence Award* and your kind generosity. This award has allowed me to continue my goal of studying cancer to make a worthwhile contribution towards finding a cure.

My research aims to better understand the spread of cancer from one organ to another, and to determine ways to stop this process from occurring as most cancer-related deaths are due to its spread. The *Marilyn Wener Excellence Award* has helped me investigate pertinent questions related to the spread of cancer, such as: how do underlying health conditions, such as obesity, affect how cancer spreads? Investigating such questions allows for a better understanding of how cancer spreads, and how we can target this process for therapeutic benefit. The *Marilyn Wener Excellence Award* has not only advanced my research pursuits, but also furthered my appreciation for community activities. I was a co-organizer for the Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Institute's Research Symposium in 2021, and I am currently the Chair of the Students Advocating For Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee at McGill University. Now that I have graduated, I am applying to do my postdoctoral fellowship in cancer research, and I hope to one day run my own laboratory while promoting inclusive and progressive environments. This award will help me pursue these goals.

I am truly grateful for this award and would like to thank you again for your support.

Sincerely,
Sheri McDowell

Made to make a difference.

By pushing forward
and breaking through.





Made by McGill: THE CAMPAIGN FOR OUR THIRD CENTURY.



JAMES MCGILL CIRCLE

We are very grateful for the generous support of James McGill Circle donors. Should you have any questions about this impact report, please contact Elin Soderstrom, James McGill Circle Stewardship Officer, at elin.soderstrom@mcgill.ca or 514.398.4054.